

CAPTAIN PAUL CUFFEE

The celebrated Bulwer-Lytton has recorded in one of his happy little bon-mots that "In the lexicon of youth which fate reserves for a bright manhood there is no such word as fail," and his own splendid career was the best possible illustration of the saying. For not only did he achieve highest distinction as novelist, dramatist and poet of various kinds but won solid fame as a diplomatist, and statesman in parliament where as an orator, though deprived of hearing (that almost indispensable attribute of a speaker) he reached a place very near the top rank of British speakers. But the great Mr. Johnson who reached the pinnacle of fame from the opposite end of the ladder of human progress declared that "mere unassisted merit advances slowly if - what is not very common - it advances at all." And he too was a splendid example of the truth of his own saying; for though the old moralist reigned the unquestioned head of English letters during the last decades of his career, he had yet tested the bread of sorrow in earlier days, going far beyond man's average years ere attaining to either fame or fortune. Indeed one has only to read Johnson's best poem "The vanity of human wishes", to find that neglected worth was a favorite note of his song. The truth is these two writers approached the same question from different points of view; and both were right in a way. Bulwer-Lytton coming to his subject with the artificial advantage which a distinguished American author tells us always awaits every Englishman even as presiding officer of town meeting, probably mistook his own easy attainment for success for the standard of all aspirants; while the good doctor in winning his way through exceptionally rocky stages probably concluded his own hard road to be that of the average man to advancement. But though the novelist is the more optimistic and inspiring to the young by his happy phrasing, it is nevertheless impossible for candid research to turn the leaves of the poet without feeling that the old moralist has fingered with greater nicety the pulse of human society. For on whatever hand the student of research turns in the dusty stacks of great libraries he finds men and measures that once stirred and moulded the world long since dropped from the memory of history.

"There hidden - far beneath and long ago." Men after men go their brief rounds on the stage of human activity with a mighty parade of importance only to find at the evening of their career a night setting into which no day succeeds. And even those who do survive seem often to reach us more by chance, than by merit of achievements. How otherwise would it be possible to meet with so many charlatans strutting down the pages of history while men of more enduring worth and lives of happier influence for good with their fellow-men should be so soon forgotten!

Of this latter class of men was Captain Paul Cuffe, the intrepid mariner of New Bedford of long ago. The few accounts of Paul Cuffee's life in the papers which have reached us from his

day, agree substantially in the views that Captain Paul Cuffe was a man of great worth, possessing a high order both of intellect and character. The father of Paul Cuffe was an African slave belonging at one time to Capt. William Slocum of Dartmouth, a suburban town of New Bedford, and was known while a slave as Cuffee Slocum. But Cuffee Slocum was a very industrious man and accumulated by hard work in odd hours sufficient to purchase his freedom, and in his free status adding the name of John to that of Cuffee (which derision had given him) was known ever afterwards as John Cuffe. This John Cuffe drifted in time to Cuttyhunk, one of the Elizabeth Islands living in Buzzard's Bay some dozen miles South of New Bedford, Massachusetts. here he met and was married to Ruth Moses, a woman, mainly of Indian blood and by her became in the course of time the father of ten children - four boys and six girls. here on Cuttyhunk Island Paul, the youngest of the boys was born in 1759. The Cuffes however did not continue long after this on the Island but moved on the mainland to Westport, a little village on the Westport River about the same distance (though to Southwest) from New Bedford as is Cuttyhunk. At Westport the Cuffe family as the name came to be spelled, entered into farming, the father with his usual industry, soon having saved enough to purchase a few acres of his own at that place. His together with the aid of his sons he tilled with fair success until his death about the breaking out of the Revolution in 1775. Paul who was now about 14 years, continued for a while on the farm with his brothers. But in the following year, 1776, he made a voyage as sailor to the Bay of Mexico and another soon to the West Indies, but on the third voyage the ship was captured by the British and Paul with other members of the crew was imprisoned at New York for three months. This experience somewhat cooled his ardor for the sea, and he went back in consequence as farmhand to Westport where he remained for the next two years..

It was during this time that Paul together with his brother John was called upon to pay his taxes by the tax-officer of his district to which they strongly objected to doing because he was not possessed of a citizen's rights. After demurring for some time, they paid the collector, however, and then addressed a petition to the Massachusetts' Legislature, representing the injustice done him and other free colored people who had thus to pay for the support of a government which denied them citizens' rights and privileges. This petition is said to have created much excitement at the time and was bitterly opposed by some of the Massachusetts of that day. This petition which is said to have been passed by a large majority in the legislature was presented to the General Court in February 1780, and is like several others presented by colored men about the same time, but there is no record of its ever having been specifically acted upon by the Legislature. And probably there was no need for special action, as the New State Constitution containing the celebrated Declaration of

Rights was adopted in the autumn of that year and it was through this that the whole status of the colored race was changed in the State, beginning with the abolition of slavery almost immediately by what is known as the liberty suit.[¶] There were in fact several of these suits in the judicial history of New England beginning as far back as 1703 when a mulatto woman of Connecticut got damages against her owner for having detained and forced her to work after the time of her freedom. In fact there was several of these cases even in Massachusetts alone and occurring so nearly at the same time as to leave some doubts about which was the first. The best known of these minor cases is that of Elizabeth Freeman, generally spoken of as the "Mum Bet Case" in which the distinguished Theodore Sedgwick himself afterwards filling every important office in the gift of his State was the counsel for the woman. Another case very similar was that in Nantucket where William Rotch, the noted New Bedford Quaker and a staunch friend of Cuffe, refused to pay the wages of a colored sailor to his master, but paid them to the sailor instead on the ground that the Bill of Rights had made him free, and Rotch's position was sustained by the Court. But the cause celebre against slavery in Massachusetts was the case of Quark Walker versus Nathaniel Jennison and as this case was fought out in every phase through all the courts and was based on the same principle involved in ^{the} other two, let us give the proceedings a little more at length..[^]

The case of Walker against Jennison was brought as had been the other two under the clause in the declaration of rights in the Massachusetts State Constitution which runs: "All men are born free and equal and have certain natural, essential and unalienable rights among which may be recorded the right of enjoying and defending their lives and liberties; that of acquiring possessing and protecting property in fine that of seeking and obtaining their safety and happiness." The Massachusetts Constitution was adopted on the 25th of October 1790 by a popular vote. This particular part of the constitution had been adopted by Judge John Lowell of Newburyport, the grandfather of the celebrated poet Lowell. Judge Lowell who was one of the committee appointed by the constitutional convention which sat in Cambridge that year for the purpose of forming the constitution, had thus carefully improved upon the language of the Declaration of Independence with this special object in view, and had accomplished his task with such consummate art that only the knowing ones were supposed to be aware of what was intended. Let us indicated in the foregoing cases, the intent and purpose of the declaration had become early known in all parts of the State. And the Walker case made its meaning common property ever afterwards. (It is a high enough honor to Newburyport or any other town to have produced two such men as John Lowell and William Lloyd Garrison, the one the author and finisher of antislavery in the State, the other in the nation; and is well worth noting that the force with which

Judge Lowell's ideas in the Massachusetts declaration of rights were turned against slavery became in after years the chief source of the Liberty party's as well as of Mr. Sumner's conviction that the Declaration of Independence abolished slavery.)

Quark Walker was a colored man who lived at Barre in Worcester County, Mass., with Nathaniel Jennison, claimed as his slave. He had come to Jennison as a part of the latter's wife's share of her father James Caldwell's property. She herself had died in 1774 and Quark continued with her husband as before. In April 1781, John Caldwell a distant relative of Jennison's deceased wife, saw Quark at work for Jennison as before and told him he was no longer a slave, but was now a free man, and ought to work for himself. Caldwell also offered Walker word and agreed to pay him for it. The latter without further delay left the Jennison farm and went to work for neighbor Caldwell. Jennison went with some friends after Quark, and found him at work in Caldwell's field and bade him return home. Walker refused to go, whereat Jennison with the aid of his friends administered a severe flogging and had Quark locked up for a short while as additional punishment. Caldwell is said to have prevailed on the man who had the slave in custody to let him go, which was done after a short while. The case was now taken to the courts for settlement. Two suits were entered, Walker bringing suit against Jennison for trespass, and Jennison suing Caldwell for enticing Walker away. Walker recovered judgment in June 1781 in the Court of Common Pleas against Jennison for 50 pounds damages; and Jennison appealed to the Superior Court. But, failing to prosecute his appeal judgment was rendered for Walker at the September Term of the Superior Court 1781. At the same term of the Court of Common Pleas, Jennison's action against Caldwell for depriving him of the services of his servant Walker, was tried; and a verdict was returned in favor of Jennison. This case was also appealed and the lower court's decision was set aside in the September term of 1781. But the most important part of the case is the other suit which Quark Walker brought against Jennison for flogging and ill-usage at the time of trying to force him to return. This case was entered at the September term of the Superior Court as soon as judgment in the former suit had been pronounced. This second case did not reach a final decision till the September term of 1783 when Jennison was finally pronounced guilty and paid \$40.00 and costs.

The county court which passed upon the former cases was at the time final, having been so constituted by the Legislature pending the reorganization of the State courts then in process. But when the last case came to final hearing the state Supreme Court (established July 1782) was in full swing, and Chief Justice William Cushing who delivered the opinion went pretty generally into the whole slavery question. He held in part: "As to the doctrine of slavery, and the rights of christians to hold Africans in perpetual servitude, and sell and treat them as we do our horses and cattle, that (it is true) has been heretofore

" countenanced by the Province laws formerly but nowhere is it expressly enacted or established. It has been a usage which took its origin from the practice of some of the European nations and in the regulations of the British government respecting the then Colonies for the benefit of trade and wealth. But whatever sentiments have formerly prevailed in this particular, or slid in upon us by the example of others, a different idea has taken place with the people of America, more favorable to the natural rights of mankind and to the natural innate desire of liberty with which Heaven without regard to color, complexion or shape of noses (features) has impressed all the human race and upon this ground our Constitution of government, by which the people of this Commonwealth have solemnly bound themselves, sets out with declaring that all men are born free and equal, and that every subject os entitled to liberty and to have it guarded by the laws as well as life and property - in short, is wholly repugnant to the idea of being born slaves. This being the case, I think the idea of slavery is inconsistent with our own conduct and Constitution and there can be no such thing as perpetual servitude of a rational creature unless his liberty be forfeited by some crime, conduct or given up by personal consent or contact."

(Hurd page 352, Vol II.)

It might as well be added here as anywhere that not only was Levi Lincoln, the brilliant lawyer, who was himself Governor later on, attorney for Quark Walker, but he as well as every member of the court at this trial had been member of the convention which drew up the State Constitution and consequently the Declaration of Rights. There was no question of this decision(s not being in accordance with the best and latest advanced thought of the State. This decision changed the status of the whole colored race in Massachusetts ever afterwards. And while Capt. Cuffee and his brother petitioners were not slaves, they yet profited by this decision, which did away with the last figment of an excuse for treating colored people different from whites. For there was no other positive enactments against equality to overcome, and both slaves and free blacks soon came to be treated like others in the larger essentials of life. This fight for citizen's rights was the first to bring Paul before the public as a man worthy of the highest regard for it is one of the very first recorded instances of such a protest in the history of the State.

Some time about 1779 in his 20th year Paul with his brother David as a partner built and launched his first boat on the Westport river, with the understanding that they were to navigate it together. But the war was still in full swing and the brother being equally a poor sailor and soldier, became alarmed through fear of capture, and abandoned the boat on its first trip at some point in Connecticut. Paul had therefore to return with the ship. On another occasion about this time while making a voyage to Nantucket in his boat, the vessel was seized by the refugee pirates who robbed him of his boat and cargo. Nothing daunted, in

connection with his brother before mentioned he built another boat, and having procured a cargo upon his own credit, Paul again started for Nantucket and was again chased by pirates, and in eluding them in the dark, ran his boat upon a rock upon one of the Elizabeth Islands, and so badly damaged it as to render a return home necessary for repairs. These repairs made, he again set sail for Nantucket, and reaching that island this time in safety, he sold his cargo to goo advantage. His boat was on another occasion way-laid by pirates, while he was voyaging to Nantucket and Cuffe lost all but his ship. He never the less perservered in this Nantucket trade and laid with it the foundation of a lucrative business. But our ambitious young sailor determined to enter more largely into the cargoing trade, and therefore applied himself to the study of navigation and so eager was he in this matter that he mastered that difficult subject in the short space of two weeks. About this same time he purchased another boat of 12 tons and hired a man to help him man her; and with this boat he extended the radius of his ~~trading~~ trading into Connecticut and other nearby points.

About the beginning of his 25th year, our subject took unto himself a wife from among the Indian tribe of his mother's people, and as the interest in sea-faring business was at a lull, he spent the next few years farming at Westport. But his old predilections for the sea, soon returned, and having procured a vessel of some 18 tons he began anew voyaging over the trackless dep. His first trip in his new venture was to St. George's Banks for cod-fish, a cargo of which he procured and disposed of to good advantage. Cuffe made several voyages to the codfish region and his trading proved so profitable that his fellow-townsman also entered largely into the business. Indeed this species of commerce became so lucrative to our subject that he formed a partnership with his brother-in-law, Michael Wainer, for conducting it. Wainer was himself most enterprising, both himself and family of sons four of whom becoming in after years captains and mates of vessels sailing out of New Bedford. The two partners built a 25 ton vessel with which they made several profitable trips to Belle Isle and were soon forced in consequence of increased business to build another boat nearly double in size of the former vessel with which they greatly enlarged their whaling interest. Capt. Cuffe went on a whaling trip to the Banks in 1792 and not having sufficiently provided himself with harpoons and other instruments for the catch asked other whalers for aid. All of them refused, and resented his attempt to enter into business competition with them. But Cuffe and his men began working with what instruments they had, and as the other whalers soon discovered that they were not only succeeding but were liable to scare the game away by their inexperience, aid was soon offered the black whalers. Seven whalers were taken on this occasion and with them he made a trip to Philadelphia where he disposed of the oil and bone with his usual success.

While in Philadelphia he purchased iron and other equipments for building a new vessel. This new boat of the schooner type and of 69 tons burthen, was launched and christened the "Ranger" in 1795. At the same time he disposed of the two former vessels, and having purchased a cargo of two thousand dollars value, sailed to Norfolk, Virginia and sold it at a good profit, ~~and bought~~ ^{intending to buy} a cargo of corn on the Eastern shore of Maryland for the return trip, ~~But~~ ² trading in the South proved to be quite different thing from what it was in the North, and Cuffe only succeeded in buying the corn after much difficulty as the very presence of himself and crew alarmed the whites there for fear of the unfavorable impressions it might make upon the slaves to see free black men conducting such business. Indeed they refused him permission to land at first, and even after it was shown that his ship was regularly registered and he and crew were of the best intention they were not allowed to land for some time. Discretion soon reasserted itself however among those Marylanders and ere Cuffe's boat sailed, they had not only most of them visited him aboard of her, but had sold him the cargo of corn. One of them even invited him to meet at dinner some friends and his family. Capt. Cuffee took on more than 3000 bushels of corn on this occasion which he disposed of at such an advantage at New Bedford as to net \$1000. Indeed he at once doubled the trip, bringing away a second time a similar amount of corn which he again sold at great profit to himself. With the money earned on these Maryland voyages he was enabled to purchase a home and adjoining farm at Westport for which he paid \$3500 in cash.

As these trips to Maryland had supplied the corn market at New Bedford, Capt. Cuffee now sought some business in the carrying trade which he found in a large cargo of gypsum which he took from Passamaquoddy Bay to Philadelphia. Several other similar though shorter voyages were made, all accruing greatly ^{to} his financial advantage. In fact the carrying business proved so profitable that Capt. Cuffe built in a very few years' time two large vessels, completing the first of these, a brig of 162 tons, in 1800, and the second the Alpha, in 1806. He owned one half of the former boat, which was commanded by his nephew, Thomas Wainer, and three fourths of the second, which he himself captained. Upon the Alpha our subject sailed several times into Southern ports, experiencing just enough trouble on occasions to let him know that the sight of his ship with her colored captain and crew was not relished in those waters. One of these voyages extended all the way from Wilmington, Del., to Savannah, Ga., thence to Gottenberg, Sweden, back to Philadelphia. After returning from that long voyage Capt. Cuffee laid down in his Westport ship yard the brig "Traveller" of which he was half owner and which quitted the ways in 1809. He was now the heaviest owner in four ships - The Ranger 69 tons burden, The brig 169 tons, the Alpha, 268 tons and the Ranger, 109 tons, - and the management of these together with his farming interest kept him close to business. He remained at Westport supervising his various concerns for the next few years leav-

ing the captaining of the vessels to his relatives and others equally trustworthy.

It was about this time that the works of Thomas Clarkson on the abolition of the slave-trade came under his notice. This he read with such profound interest that its impression together with what he had himself seen on his Southern voyages began to bring him to the conclusion that upon the whole there was no hopeful outlook for his people in this country.. He therefore began to consider the advisability of colonization for the blacks. To this end he opened up correspondence with the members of the British African Institution which at that time had the management of the Sierra Leone settlement in hand. From various communications had with these and other sources he determined to make an inspection of the colonization in progress on the African coast. Having therefore confided the management of his own immediate affairs to safe hands Cuffe sailed with a crew of seven on the Traveller, Capt. Thomas Wainer in charge early in the year of 1811, and arrived at Sierra Leone after a voyage of two months. In the African colony he remained another two months studying the conditions and needs of the colonists. He had several ~~and~~ frequent interviews with the governor and leading inhabitants, suggesting improvements, such as the formation of a society for the promotion of the interest of its members and the colonists in general. As a result of his suggestion an organization known as "The Friendly Society of Sierra Leone" was immediately formed, most of leading blacks of the place, becoming members. On the 20th of April, 1811, this society issued an address to the Christian World on the inconsistency of Christians profession and practice in slaveholding and gave Capt. Cuffe a copy of the letter to bring back to America with him. After looking things over at Sierra Leone, Capt. Cuffe determined to get into touch with the London management of the colony, and therefore made application to secure and take a cargo of African produce to England. He sought and received license for this purpose of the African Institute, whose members having heard of him and his achievements were eager to see and know more about him. Accordingly having disposed of such things as he had carried out with him, Capt. Cuffe loaded his ship with African effects and sailed from Freetown for England, reaching Liverpool on the First day of August, 1811. His crew on this occasion consisted of eight men and a boy Aaron Richards whom he took along with the intention of educating, leaving Thomas Wainer, his nephew captain of the boat behind to continue investigation in the needs and best method for improvement in the colony, but particularly to make ready a cargo for the return trip home.

Capt. Cuffe's arrival in England attracted wide newspaper comment at the time; both the daily and monthly press took note of it. The London Times of Aug. 2, 1811 announced- "The brig Traveller lately arrived at Liverpool from Sierra Leone is perhaps the first vessel that ever reached Europe entirely owned and naviga-

" ted by Negroes. This brig is owned and commanded by Paul Cuffe
 " the son of " Cuffee" a Negro slave imported into America. Her
 " mate and all her crew are Negroes, or the immediate descendants
 " of Negroes. Capt. Cuffe is about 56 years of age; has a wife (a
 Negress) and six children living at New Bedford, Massachusetts of
 " which State he is a citizen. When Capt. Cuffe's father (who had
 " acquired his freedom) died he left a family almost unprovided
 for; but he labored hard to support them. He began to trade in a
 " small boat and after a while almost by himself, built a larger
 vessel in which he worked some years with assiduity. Having met
 " a person wishing to import some knowledge of navigation his ideas
 were enlarged and with his prospects he enlarged his efforts to
 " succeed. Happily for him and his family, his mind received re-
 ligious instruction from the Society of Friends, and he attached
 " himself to that respectable body, adopted their dress and lan-
 guage and is now a respectable member of that community. When Mr.
 " Clarkson's History of the abolition of the slave trade fell into
 " his hands it awakened all the powers of his mind to considera-
 tion of his origin and the duties he owed his people. With the
 view of ~~the~~ benefitting the Africans he made a voyage to Sierra
 Leone and with the same object has come to England. Capt. Cuffe
 " is of an agreeable countenance, and his physiognomy truly inter-
 esting; he is both tall and stout, speaks English well, dresses
 " in the Quaker style, in a drab coloured suit, and wears a large
 flopped white hat. He is coming to London to confer on his fav-
 orite topic with the Directors of the African Institution."

(London Times Aug 2, 1811)

The colored mariner and crew remained in England some two months, meeting with every mark of attention and respect. He went twice from Liverpool to London during this interval, the second time at the special request of the Board of the African Institution who were desirous of consulting with him as to the best means of carrying on their benevolent views respecting African colonization. While in London Capt. Cuffe resided at the house of one of the directors of the African Institution. A special meeting of that Society at which the Duke of Gloucester presided was called to confer with the visiting seaman. Paul's replies to all their questioning greatly pleased the committee by the frankness shown and some articles of African origin presented to the Duke drew from His Royal Highness a most flattering letter to Capt. Cuffe. He thus had an opportunity of laying his intentions and of opening his prospects before those philanthropic gentlemen, who cordially acquiesced with him in all his plans, and who gave him authority to carry over from America a few colored people of good character for the purpose of instruction the natives in agriculture and the mechanical arts. The "Edinburgh Review" for August also remarked on the strangeness of the sight of a ship with black master, officers and crew, in the port of Liverpool which up to 1807, only four years before, was the very nidus of the slave-trade. Praise for his business sagacity, seamanship and high char-

acter was liberally bestowed on Capt. Cuffe, and crew, and that review closed by enlarging upon the animating spectacle of their seeing this free and enlightened African entering as an independent trader into one of the world's chief ports. The Liverpool Mercury published also an exhaustive account of Capt. Cuffe's life and progress which came in time to be the chief source for facts and about him. The "Traveler's cargo was consigned to W. and R. Rathbone, merchants of Liverpool. The people at Liverpool, according to the mercury, were greatly impressed with the manner of the colored captain and his crew, as " during their stay, they were remarkable for their good conduct, and proper behavious; the greatest cordiality appeared to prevail amongst them". Cuffe sailed out of Liverpool on the 20th of September 1811 back to Sierra Leone, with a license, to the honor of the British Government, permitting him to prosecute his voyage, and taking with him some goods as a consignment to the " Friendly Society" to encourage them in the way of trade. Once again at Sierra Leone, our subject delivered the goods and other effects consigned to the citizens of that colony; and when he had completed his arrangements for the reception of those he should bring from America, the " Traveller" once more stood off for New Bedford. Cuffe reached home late in the autumn of 1811 with head filled with new projects about African colonization and with heart expanding at the prospect. After a brief stay at home he set about carrying out his plans when to his utter confusion war was begun between England and America. He could go no further at that time with colonizing in Sierra Leone; for that would have brought him face to face with the treason section of the constitution of his country. He however busied himself with quietly looking up such mechanics and expert farmers as would be suitable for the work in hand for Sierra Leone. For this purpose he visited most of the larger Northern cities, interviewing and holding meetings with leading colored men and such white men as were friendly to colonization. He urged the formation of societies for the furtherance of his benevolent design. Two organizations- the one in New York, the other in Philadelphia - were formed and many eligible and worthy blacks were found willing and ready to go with him and settle in Africa. But the war kept all of his plans in abeyance by its uncertainty and though ready he dare not leave port. In his dilemma, Capt. Cuffe journeyed all the way to Washington to get President Madison's permission to depart with his emigrants, but the President

Thus though his purpose was the most human and laudable his request was refused on constitutional grounds and there was nothing to do but wait. He also wrote to a friend in England to secure freedom from annoyance by the British war ship in case he should

take out emigrants but this, too was refused, or at least delayed so long not to be needed in the end.. But this long delay served to increase rather than chill his interest in the colonizing scheme He employed the interval in enlisting new friends both in America and in England in his cause, by opening up correspondence with some of the most distinguished philanthropic characters on both sides of the water.

Soon as the treaty of Ghent which established peace between Great Britain and the United States on the 24th of December 1814, could become generally known to the belligerants on all parts of the sea so as to make his leaving part safe, Cuffe again hastened to get into readiness for his voyage. With 38 persons aboard, therefore, the Traveller sailed out of Boston Harbor on the 24th day of December 1815, the whole expedition financed and managed by Capt. Paul Cuffe of Westport, Massachusetts. These emigrants mostly of experts in farming and the common branches of mechanics, and had been selected with a special view to their fitness. They reached Sierra Leone after a long voyage of 55 days though without any mishap. In taking out this large number of emigrants Capt. Cuffe had greatly exceeded instructions from the directors of the London African Institution who had granted him permission to take out but eight or ten at the most. As often happens in such cases his zeal had out-stripped discretion on this occasion. But he was aware of it and generously made provision out of his own pocket for those in excess of the legitimate number. And not only did they have to be provided for on the trip out, but the great hearted mariner furnished all with sufficient supplies to last until they could reap their own produce at harvest time, which cost him more than Four thousand dollars (\$4000.) Indeed it is safe to say that the whole expense for the three trips to Sierra Leone and to England and back amounted to more than \$10,000. a sum then equal nearly to five times that amount in the money of our day.

On arrival at Sierra Leone Capt. Cuffe presented his emigrants to the Governor who allotted to each family a small parcel of land in the town, and from thirty to forty acres to each family some two miles out from the town. Capt. Cuffe's only demand was that a house should be built for each family on its farm. He remained at Sierra Leone some two, getting his passengers settled and drew and published an address not only to those but to the whole colored race urging christianity and sobriety of conduct as the only road to enduring success everywhere. The intrepid mariner now turned to retrace his steps homeward, but before sailing he applied to the Governor of the colony for a licence to trade there, which meant that he intended to bring more colonists as well as build up some commercial intercourse with the place. But by the treaty of Ghent just ratified, Americans were excluded from trading with British colonies, and there is no record of a special

license's ever having been issued to Cuffe as an exception to the treaty. Even if permission had finally been granted him, he would not have been able to avail himself of the privilege, for he fell sick of a complaint in a short time after reaching home which proved fatal on the 7th of September, 1817.

Throughout the worst stages of his long illness the question of improving the status of the blacks was a constant theme with him, both talking and corresponding with friends about it. While he saw that his own opportunity to aid in the colonizing scheme was passed, he was greatly rejoiced to find the matter becoming a topic of much interest throughout the country. The longest communication reaching us from his pen was sent to a friend about to visit Africa in search of a place to colonize American colored people, and gives us his ideas as well as the history and details of his last trip to Sierra Leone. This information became in time the basis for all subsequent reckoning on the cost per head of colonizing in Africa. All of the early leaders in this enterprise made use of Cuffe's views and experiences in taking out expeditions. Capt. Cuffe was a devout Christian according to the Quaker persuasion, having long been a regular member of the Friend's meeting house at Westport. In fact he was an earnest and devout Quaker as well in religion and speech as in dress, and often delivered short discourses at their meetings. And it was in the full triumph of this faith that this good and pious man passed away surrounded by a devoted family and friends. (See Williams' Eulogy)

Several anecdotes have come down to us regarding Capt. Paul Cuffe's connection and membership of the Society of Friends and his deep interest in the ministry. His communications were usually short and modestly expressed, but marked by good sense and a deep devotional feeling. His great respectability and noble character rendered him a welcome guest at the house and table of the late William Rotch and other members of his family as well as of the Society of Friends generally. A little anecdote connected with this subject I have heard related. On the occasion of one of his visits, he stopped at one of the public houses in this place; and while warming himself by the fire, in the traveler's room, the hour of having arrived, the landlady came to Friend Cuffe and told him that she would prepare a separate table for him. He politely thanked her for the attention and then informed her, much to her chagrin that he had previously accepted an invitation to dine with William Rotch. When enquiring concerning William Rotch, I met a friend English Friend attended the meeting in New Haven of which Paul Cuffe was a member, the meeting house, as before stated being not far from his house. At the close of the meeting, the strong and kind persons in his visit were invited to dine with Friend Cuffe, a reciprocal kindness which was readily accepted by his friend on the behalf of himself and guest. After the dinner

was laid upon the table in a neat and bountiful manner Friend Rotch observed that Paul and his wife had no chairs set for themselves and were modestly preparing to retire or remain until the guests had dined. At this Friend Rotch arose and in a firm but kind manner addressing his host and hostess, said that he could not consent to such an arrangement and that he should not take his seat at the table unless Paul and his wife presided. With all his gentleness and humanity , no man was more unflinching where a matter of conscience was concerned than Friend Ritch with this trait in his friend's character to demur,

(Ricketson pp 254-5)

Of education such as we knot it today, Paul Cuffe could boast of but little, having been a graduate mainly from the school of hard experience. At 14 he is said to have known but little more than his letters. In this as in most of the matters of his life however he made up by industry what he lacked in opportunity. He applied himself with such assiduity that with the occasional aid received from friends he soon learned to read and write, and in the same way attained to quite some proficiency in arithmetic and navigation. Indeed our subject who in later years proved to be such an xperienc d seaman in all parts of the world is said to have picked up his entire mastery of navigation in the course of two weeks. Mindful of his own lack of opportunity for schooling in his childhood, Cuffe determined that no such handicap should beset the early years of his own children. When therefore the Westport people first concluded to establish a village school, a meeting was called for this purpose. When therefore about the year 1797 the good people of Westport had concluded to establish a village school and several meetings held for that purpose had proved fruitless of results owing to diversity of views, Paul Cuffe built at his own expense and on his own land, a public school building and donated it to the town for the use of the community. The offer was accepted in the same spirit it was made, and as in all his other deeds of philanthropy in after life, Cuffe felt himself fully compensated in the satisfaction he derived in seeing the building devoted to so useful and exalted purpose. The school was opened and became at once available to the whole community; and it is the first gift of that kind in the history of the country from the munificence of a colored man.

In person Paul Cuffe is said to have been of a somewhat Indian redishness, with hair more or less straight. In frame tall, well-formed and athletic; his deportment conciliating yet dignified and prepossessing. His countenance blending bravity with modesty and sweet ness and firmness with gentleness and humanity. The following account appeared in the Boston Commercial Gazette on the 11th of September 1817.

Utility

Died at Westport on the 7th of Sept., Paul Cuffe, a very respectable man of colour, in the 59th year of his age. A descendant of Africa, he overcame by native strength of mind, and firm adherence to principle, the prejudices with which her descendants are too generally viewed. Industrious, temperate, and prudent, his means of acquiring property, small at first, were gradually increased; and the strict integrity of his conduct gained him numerous friends, to whom he never gave occasion to regret the confidence they had placed in him. His mercantile pursuits were generally successful; and blessed with competence, if not with wealth, the enlarged benevolence of his mind was manifested, not only in acts of charity to individuals, and in the promotion of objects of general ~~well~~ ^{utility} ability, but more particularly in the deep interest he felt for the welfare of his brethren of the African race. He was concerned not only to set them a good example by his own correct conduct, to admonish and counsel them against the ~~vices~~ vices and habits to which he found them most prone - but more extensively to promote their welfare, and at considerable sacrifice of property, he three times visited the colony of Sierra Leone; and after his first voyage thither, went to England, where he much noticed by the members of the African institution, who conferred with him on the best manner of extending the means of civilization to the people of Africa, and some of whom have since expressed their satisfaction in his pious labours in the colony; believing them to have been productive of much usefulness to that settlement.

Grave, humble, and unassuming ~~in his deportment~~, he was remarkable for great civility and sound discretion. Through several months severe afflictions, he was preserved in much Christian patience, fortitude, and resignation; feeling entire confidence in that grace which had been vouchsafed to him in life, and by which through faith and obedience, he felt a comfortable hope of admittance into peace and rest. He has left a widow and several children to lament the loss of an affectionate husband and parent. Many of his neighbours and friends evinced their respect for his memory by attending his funeral, which was conducted agreeably to the usages of the Society of Friends, of which he was a member; and at which several lively testimonies were borne to the truth, that the Almighty parent has "made of one blood all the nations of men," and that, "in every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted with Him."

Cuffe was survived by his wife and six children, one of whom, William became a captain of a sailing vessel, himself in after years while his widow lived till 1836. Capt. Cuffe was buried in the little Friends burying ground hardly by his old farm which was near Hex's bridge on the West bank of the Westport river.

EXTRACT O F LETTERS WRITTEN BY CAPT. PAUL CUFFEE TO
MR. MILLS, WESTPORT, 8th mo. 6th inst. 1816.

Esteemed Friend:-

I do not expect to send a vessel to Africa this ensuing winter, when I went last to Africa, I was somewhat disappointed in not having a special license from the British government.

My correspondent William Allen, of London, a member of the London African institution, wrote to me to come to London, and engage with them, and keep open a communication between England and Africa. I have informed him that my wish is for the good of the African Africans generally. If we could open a circular route from Africa to England, and thence to America, I feel disposed to be made use of in any way that appeared most advantageous, I have not had any returns.

The people I carried out to Africa, were well received and had land granted them, they much want at Sierra Leone, a good millwright, a saw mill is necessary, also a rice mill for cleaning rice.

COPY OF CITATION

COLONY OF SIERRA LEONE, 25th of March.

Mr. Perry Locke.- You are hereby summoned and required to appear at the ensuing general session of the peace, which will be held at the Court Hall in Freetown, on Wednesday the 10th day of April, at the hour of ten in the forenoon, there to serve as a grand juror: herein fail not at your peril.

W. D. GRANT, Sheriff.

Perry Locke was one of the passengers that I carried out, he made great complaint to me, because he was called upon, I told him he complained in America because he was deprived of these privileges. And then he murmured because he was thus called upon; go and fill thy seat, do as well as thou canst. I mention this, that others may see, that they have equal rights in Africa.

P. C.

WESTPORT, 1st mo. 6th, 1817.

Respected Friend:-

The population of Sierra Leone in 1811 was 2000, and about 1000 in the suburbs. Since that time they have not been numbered, but the colony according to my judgment, from 1811 to 1815 had much improved, the soil for cultivation is not very flattering, but it is advantageously situated for a town, and ship nav-

igation. The coast of Africa abounds with rivers, the great river Gambia, according to the best information given me is very fertile, as is the Island Burso at the mouth of said river, but they are said to be sickly to the northern constitutions. There is a river about 50 leagues south of Cape Sierra Leone, called the Sherborough, good navigation, and soil excellent. Agreeable to information given me by a citizen of Sierra Leone, the citizen has ever been desirous that a settlement should be established at that place, with those people that may come from America, he is a man of good character. The great River Congo, near the equator, its powerful population and goodness of soil, I hope will not always be neglected. I much approve of a vessels being sent as thou mentioned.

In 1815 I carried out to S. Leone, nine families, 38 in number and in 1816, I have had so many applications, that I believe I might have had the greater part to have carried out of Boston and the vicinity. I should think about Christmas, would be the most healthy season for a vessel to arrive on the coast. As to the length of the voyage, it would depend on the extent of discoveries to be made. I think from twelve to eighteen months, provided the voyage should extend to the Cape of Goodhope and the Tristan Islands.

I should suppose that one vessel would be sufficient for visiting the coast; as to the force necessary, thou art the best judge. I think that the government of Great Britain would not receive large numbers of every description of people of colour at their colony. Were the United States to undertake to settle a colony in Africa, it would be best to have good characters until the colony was well established. The English would not probably admit a free trade at Sierra Leone, unless they made a neutral port of it.

I shoul suppose that all those people who are willing to go to Sierra Leone, would have no objection to settling a new colony, thirty-eight in number went out with me, their expense was estimated at one hundred dollars per head; but were there a larger number, they could be carried out for sixty dollars - the expense of thirty of the above number was borne by Paul Cuffee, the others paid their own passages. In addition to the above expense, I furnished them with provisions to the amount of 159 pounds 8s3d sterling, all this was done without fee or reward, my hope is in a com ing day.

PAUL CU~~FEE~~.

But the collector would neither clear him or give him back his papers, and ~~in a letter~~ showered him with abuse for his presumption.
Cuffe had no other course left but to go to the president in Washington for redress, and thither ~~hastened~~ repaired in all haste. This was during the presidency of James Madison and to him the dark-skinned put his case thus: "James I have been put to much trouble and have been abused" and proceeded to tell the president his whole story and gave such proof as was necessary in the case and adding "I have come here for thy protection and to thee to order thy collector for the port of New Bedford to clear me out for New Bedford". (A.S. Aug 22 18